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NSC BRIEFING

20 October 1959

LAOS

- I. Communist harassment, recruiting, and propaganda activities continuing in widely scattered areas.
 - A. Government especially vulnerable to this kind of activity in southern Laos, which is only lightly garrisoned.
 - B. In southernmost province, for example, government garrisons only two towns, thus permitting insurgents to roam at will in rest of province, where they are said to be conducting effective scare campaign.
 - C. Western residents in Laos have been struck by mobility of small bands of insurgents, which tends to give impression of greater strength than is actually case.
- II. UN Subcommittee principals will begin writing their report in New York shortly.
- III. Meanwhile, small subcommittee contingent has been left behind in Laos to assure continued UN presence.
 - A. Hammarskjold plans personally to fly to Laos in early November to arrange for installation his representative.
 - B. Preliminary soundings with the Russians encouraged Hammarskjold to believe he could do this without any specific mandate from Security Council of General Assembly, and he seems to be proceeding on this assumption.

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IV. Premier Phoui, fearful that pressure might develop in UN for negotiations between Laos and North Vietnam, has flown to this country in order personally to look after his country's interests in any UN consideration of the Laotian problem.

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